

# Property Research



Property research is a popular reason for visiting us at PAMA's archives. People come here to investigate when their house was built, who once owned pieces of land, or whether a property is worth designating as historically significant.

This post will give you an overview of doing archival property research within Peel. Depending on why you're researching a property, your needs may vary.

In future posts we'll get into more detail about how to use some important land records. For now let's look at some basic guidelines and record types.

## Be prepared to do some detective work.

Unless the property you're researching has an unusual history or heritage designation, there likely isn't a file of information on it. You'll be doing original research trying to locate your property in historical records: you'll be following clues to put together the pieces of a puzzle. Some clues may lead you dead ends. Others may lead you to treasure you didn't expect.

Like any good detective you'll need to:

- > bank on spending several hours on your investigation
- > document your evidence by taking notes
- > consider bringing a camera and a USB flash drive!

## What do I need to bring?

Did you know that most Peel properties have two addresses? The ordinary street address is used for mail and street maps. But properties also have a legal description which is how the government views the property for tax and legal purposes.

Unlike street addresses, legal descriptions are packed with information that ties the property to its location and history. In order to help you best, we need your legal description.

1507 Clarkson Rd. N., Mississauga = TOR CON 2 SDS PT LOT 28  
9 Wellington St. E., Brampton = CHING PT LOT 5 CON 1 EHS RP43R1195

You can find your legal description in several ways:

- > On property tax assessments and bills
- > On the web (for Mississauga and Brampton residents; note that Brampton residents will need to scroll down and click the pink "My property" button)
- > At your City or Town Hall

## What will/won't I find?

No archives collects everything. For one thing, since we collect unique records, we tend to specialize. Also keep in mind that we can only provide access to records that survive or were given to us. Some simply weren't.

Here are some topics we might be able to help you with depending on the property and the surviving records:

- > Determining ownership of Peel land until about the mid-twentieth century
- > The possible build date of structures before the mid- to later twentieth century
- > History of designated (heritage) structures or of their occupants

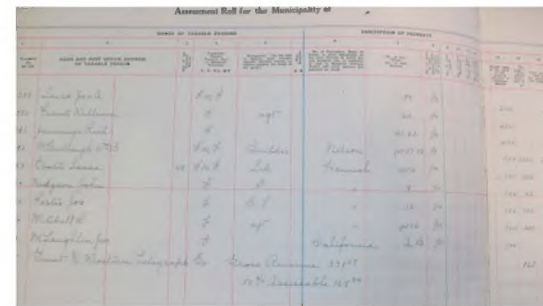
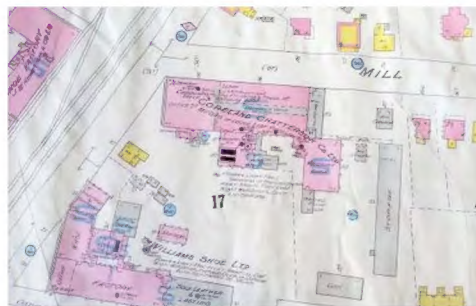
# Important land and property records

The key in knowing what records to search is to think about why or when your house or property would have been captured in a record. The answer is usually whenever the property changed ownership or was officially assessed in some way.

Here's a shortlist of the types of historical records you'll typically be working with in your property research. Beyond these (and depending on the property) we can also use other records like photographs, personal manuscripts, newspapers, and directories.



LOT No.	24	CONCESSION	L. of Dundas
DATE	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	REMARKS
1840	The Crown	John H. H.	100 Acres
1841	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1842	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1843	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1844	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1845	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1846	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1847	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1848	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1849	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1850	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1851	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1852	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1853	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1854	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1855	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1856	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1857	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1858	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1859	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1860	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1861	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1862	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1863	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1864	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1865	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1866	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1867	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1868	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1869	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1870	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1871	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1872	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1873	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1874	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1875	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1876	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1877	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1878	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1879	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1880	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1881	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1882	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1883	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1884	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1885	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1886	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1887	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1888	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1889	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1890	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1891	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1892	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1893	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1894	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1895	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1896	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1897	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1898	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1899	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres
1900	John H. H.	John H. H.	100 Acres



LOT No.	Owner	Assessed Value
1	John H. H.	100
2	John H. H.	100
3	John H. H.	100
4	John H. H.	100
5	John H. H.	100
6	John H. H.	100
7	John H. H.	100
8	John H. H.	100
9	John H. H.	100
10	John H. H.	100
11	John H. H.	100
12	John H. H.	100
13	John H. H.	100
14	John H. H.	100
15	John H. H.	100
16	John H. H.	100
17	John H. H.	100
18	John H. H.	100
19	John H. H.	100
20	John H. H.	100
21	John H. H.	100
22	John H. H.	100
23	John H. H.	100
24	John H. H.	100
25	John H. H.	100
26	John H. H.	100
27	John H. H.	100
28	John H. H.	100
29	John H. H.	100
30	John H. H.	100
31	John H. H.	100
32	John H. H.	100
33	John H. H.	100
34	John H. H.	100
35	John H. H.	100
36	John H. H.	100
37	John H. H.	100
38	John H. H.	100
39	John H. H.	100
40	John H. H.	100
41	John H. H.	100
42	John H. H.	100
43	John H. H.	100
44	John H. H.	100
45	John H. H.	100
46	John H. H.	100
47	John H. H.	100
48	John H. H.	100
49	John H. H.	100
50	John H. H.	100
51	John H. H.	100
52	John H. H.	100
53	John H. H.	100
54	John H. H.	100
55	John H. H.	100
56	John H. H.	100
57	John H. H.	100
58	John H. H.	100
59	John H. H.	100
60	John H. H.	100
61	John H. H.	100
62	John H. H.	100
63	John H. H.	100
64	John H. H.	100
65	John H. H.	100
66	John H. H.	100
67	John H. H.	100
68	John H. H.	100
69	John H. H.	100
70	John H. H.	100
71	John H. H.	100
72	John H. H.	100
73	John H. H.	100
74	John H. H.	100
75	John H. H.	100
76	John H. H.	100
77	John H. H.	100
78	John H. H.	100
79	John H. H.	100
80	John H. H.	100
81	John H. H.	100
82	John H. H.	100
83	John H. H.	100
84	John H. H.	100
85	John H. H.	100
86	John H. H.	100
87	John H. H.	100
88	John H. H.	100
89	John H. H.	100
90	John H. H.	100
91	John H. H.	100
92	John H. H.	100
93	John H. H.	100
94	John H. H.	100
95	John H. H.	100
96	John H. H.	100
97	John H. H.	100
98	John H. H.	100
99	John H. H.	100
100	John H. H.	100

## Abstract Index to Deeds (and Associated Copybooks)

The abstract indexes summarize the registered transactions by which lots in Ontario were transferred from one owner to another. These lists begin in the early 1800s with the patent of land from the Crown to its first owner. Your legal description will help us to figure out which index you should be looking at.

The index only tells you who owned land, how much they owned, how much they paid to buy or mortgage it, or whether they inherited or were given it. It usually won't tell you about buildings on the land. However, a sudden increase in the value of the land can signal something was built on it. Also, the index can point us to wills that may mention structures.

The associated copybooks give us the text of the legal transactions summarized in the indexes. They can contain transcriptions of wills which sometimes describe buildings.

## Maps and Plans

There are many types of maps in the archives. It's not always possible to find historical maps of a property but here are the most likely candidates for doing so:

- > The 1859 Tremaine Map of Peel shows the farms of the time.
- > The Historical Atlas of Peel County gives us a snapshot of who owned lots in 1877 and shows locations of farms, houses, schools, churches, and post offices.
- > Fire insurance maps show the footprints and building materials of structures in built-up areas for selected years (only a few towns or villages commissioned these).
- > Registered plans show us the intentions of subdivision developers.

Property research can be an exercise in patience; it can also open an intriguing window on how past Peel residents used and related to the land.

## Assessment Rolls

Assessment rolls are ledgers kept by townships, municipalities, or villages that show how much tax was owed on a township or subdivision lot and the buildings on it. Sometimes you can learn more about both owners and buildings from these rolls. Details can (but don't always) include occupants' names, ages, and occupations, as well as the location and value of their land and buildings.

Tax assessors walked up and down the street as they collected and recorded this information. Depending on their routes, sometimes a lot of patience is needed when searching their records!

## Contact Us

To begin your research journey, visit [www.pama.peelregion.ca/en/pamascollections/archivesresearch.asp](http://www.pama.peelregion.ca/en/pamascollections/archivesresearch.asp)

To contact the archives, call 905-791-4055 ext. 3780 or ext. 4677 and/or email [pamaarchives@peelregion.ca](mailto:pamaarchives@peelregion.ca)

Researchers are encouraged to e-mail or call at least two days in advance of their visit: calling ahead helps us to serve you better. Walk-in visitors are welcome but retrievals may be limited for walk-in researchers, depending on how busy the reading room is when you arrive and the logistics of retrieving the records you require.

To learn more about PAMA, visit [www.pama.peelregion.ca](http://www.pama.peelregion.ca)